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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
PROVIDENCE, R. I.



... A ...

# HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

of the

## First Congregational Society

IN PROVIDENCE, R. I.

Read before the Rhode Island Historical Society  
Tuesday, March 23, 1909

BY

CHARLES M. YOUNG

To which is appended the Report of the Committee on Trust Funds  
presented to the First Congregational Society, October 1,  
1907, and read in connection with the above

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## FOREWORD.

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As Chairman of the Committee on Trust Funds I had the privilege of preparing an elaborate report on the history of these funds and presenting it to the annual meeting of the First Congregational Society on October 1, 1907.

The historical matter contained in this report was received with interest and approval by members of the parish.

The report was brought to the attention of the Rhode Island Historical Society and I was invited to deliver it as an address before them. In this connection it was suggested that I should prepare a brief summary of the history of the First Congregational Society, annex it to the report, and thus bring the whole up to the required length of an evening's address. This pleasant duty I performed and by the kindness of friends, whose courtesy I deeply appreciate and acknowledge, am enabled to present it in permanent form.

C. M. Y.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., April, 1910.



A HISTORICAL RETROSPECT  
OF THE  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
IN PROVIDENCE, R. I.

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A religious society which can lay claim to nearly two hundred years of continuous historical sequence possesses an interest, not only to those who regard it with an earnest and affectionate regard, but also to the historical student who considers men, events and institutions in their true relative value not only to themselves but to each other. Such a society is the one in which I am actively interested, various aspects of whose continuous history of over one hundred and eighty years I shall endeavor this evening to portray.

Previous to the year 1723 there were but two religious societies in the Town of Providence, the First Baptist Society, dating from 1638, and the Friends, from 1718. In that year, funds having been contributed from the churches of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and from other sources, a Meeting House in which Orthodox Congregationalism was to be preached was erected on a lot known as the "Old Town House Lot" (on the corner of Benefit and College Streets), generously donated, it is presumed, by the then owner, Capt. Daniel Abbott, who was a leader in the movement to form such a Society and who became in after years one of its influential and foremost members. Previous to this period the little band of Congregationalists had been spiritually led by ministers of that faith from the neighboring colonies in which Congregationalism was the State Religion, but only in irregular and desultory visits as convenience and opportunity dictated.

"A little over a year previous to the commencement of the erection of the new edifice (October, 1721) a committee of three clergymen on behalf of the Massachusetts churches addressed a letter to the magistrates and principal men of the town of Providence to ascertain their feeling towards the new movement, and whether, if they should erect a small meeting house here, it would receive their protection. The letter is written with diplomatic courtesy, full of protestations of regard for the people of the town and a desire for cordial relations of Christian fellowship." I quote Rev. Carlton A. Staples in his *Historical Discourse* delivered at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the First Congregational Church in Providence, R. I., in 1878,—to which I am indebted for many facts herein contained:

"When we remember that the founder of our State had been driven out of Massachusetts because he opposed the then existing order of State and Church and that numbers of Quakers and Baptists had been imprisoned, fined, tortured or banished for non-conformity; and when we remember, also, that at the very time this letter was written, asking for toleration from the Baptists and Quakers here, this persecution and oppression was still going on there, we shall appreciate the assurance which dictated it and the spirit of raillery and sarcasm in which it was answered. It is signed by Peter Thacher, John Danforth and Joseph Belcher. After four months, early in 1722, a reply on behalf of the town was returned, written by Jonathan Spreague. It is an exceedingly spicy document, aimed at the intolerant and persecuting spirit of their neighbors, full of biting irony, fortified at every point by Scriptural allusions and quotations, but containing not a word in direct answer to their request."

Notwithstanding no definite reply had been received, occasional services were held in the now completed house of worship for a few years by visiting clergymen, until in May, 1728, a meeting was held "to consider their destitute condition," and the Society, by a unanimous vote, selected Josiah Cotton as their pastor. He accepted the call, and on October 23, 1728,

Old Style, he was ordained. He was at that time only twenty-six years of age, this being his first charge in the ministry, being a graduate of Harvard six years earlier. He came of a family of consecrated men, his father and brother being clergymen, and moreover, he was the great grandson of Rev. John Cotton, the famous pastor of the First Church in Boston.

He preached very acceptably here, holding the little Society strongly together until about 1742, when the Whitfield revival swept over the country like a whirlwind, defying reason and the most obvious principles of Christian faith. Nearly one-half of the communicants and many of the congregation, under its influence and in sympathy with it, seceded from the Society, formally withdrew from its membership, and under the leadership of Mr. Joseph Snow, planted on the west side of the river a new religious society styling themselves the Beneficent Congregational Church (1743).

In addition to the charges brought against Rev. Mr. Cotton, that he was not sufficiently evangelical, was ante-Christian, etc., he was charged with being a preacher of "Damnable Good Works."

Thus after fifteen years a harmonious, prosperous pastorate was wrecked on the rocks of an intense religious fanaticism, which we in this period can but faintly appreciate or understand. Families were divided, intense hostility took the place of Christian fellowship, and the result was disheartening to those who withstood the wild fury of the storm and attempted to continue regular religious worship. Rev. Mr. Cotton struggled on for a few years with the remnant of faithful adherents on a starving salary and finally resigned in July, 1747. A period of five years now elapsed before the Society selected a successor, during which time a multitude of candidates for settlement offered themselves, but none were successful.

In 1752 Rev. John Bass removed here from Ashford, Connecticut, where he had just been ejected from the Congregational Church at that place for heresy, after a pastorate of nine years, by the Consociation of Windham County. He became the second minister of this Church and served it for six years until compelled by broken health to resign. He had been the



victim in Connecticut of the same wave of religious unrest that swept over New England at that period. In his closing entry of the Church book at Ashford,—June 5, 1751—he says:

“I was dismissed from my pastoral relation to the Church and people of Ashford by the Reverend Consociation of the County of Windham for dissenting from the Calvinistic sense of the *Quinquorticular Points* which I ignorantly subscribed to before my ordination; for which, and all my other mistakes, I beg the pardon of Almighty God.” Thus a pronounced heretic as to the fundamental tenets of established Orthodoxy was selected to influence the spiritual destinies and lead and guide the spiritual aspirations of a people who, as a church, had all but been torn asunder by this identical movement which had resulted in the expulsion of their new leader by his former flock. A bold and audacious selection surely, but, I venture to assert, the stand was taken by the same kind of men and women as compose the membership of the Society to-day,—men and women who dare to trust to reason and conscience as their guide and to accept only those beliefs which appear to them rational and right.

Rev. David S. Rowland, a graduate of Yale in the class of 1743, a young man of exceptional ability and energy, was the next minister of the Society, being installed in 1762. He also came from Eastern Connecticut, where he had steadfastly remained for twelve years, maintaining his position as minister against the determined opposition of the majority of his townspeople. His selection proved most fortunate, for, during the twelve years he remained here, the Society grew in numbers and influence, although even yet seriously handicapped by financial embarrassment. His connection with the Society was severed August 25, 1774, under circumstances not now known.

In 1770, during the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Rowland, the Benevolent Congregational Society, was formed for the purpose of accumulating a fund sufficient to yield an income which should pay all the expenses of worship. It was nominally a charitable organization but was in fact what in present financial parlance would be styled a “Holding Company.”



The membership was confined exclusively to men; and, with small annual dues, it became a strong and influential corporation. It bought a farm of nearly twenty acres, near Prospect and Cushing Streets, for the use of the minister, erected a parsonage in 1784, paying all the indebtedness thereon, including a bill for fifty-four gallons of West India rum, used by the workmen. In 1794 it purchased the lot on which the present edifice stands, then extending back to Hope Street, building the large and imposing house of worship which was burned in 1814, and after its destruction erecting the present edifice on its site. It finally guaranteed the salary of the minister and other expenses of worship, assessing taxes on the pews in the Church to supplement the income from its invested funds to meet the required demands. It was finally merged into the First Congregational Society by an act of the General Assembly when the Society was incorporated at the January session of the Legislature in 1866.

The Society now being without a regular pastor and the intense agitation growing out of the commencement of hostilities of the Revolution, the interests of the Church were merged into duty to country. Services were held at irregular intervals and but little enthusiasm shown. Dr. John Lothrop, of the Second Church in Boston, driven out of his own pulpit by reason of the British occupation, occupied the pulpit from May 1775, for nearly a year. By the close of the war the scattered families returned, business revived and contentment became more assured. During the winter of 1780-81, Rev. Enos Hitchcock, then a Brigade Chaplain in the Army, preached here a few months. This resulted in his being called as minister, his installation occurring October 1, 1783. During his ministry the Society entered upon a career of substantial and permanent prosperity. With a wide knowledge of men and affairs, eager to mix in the social and business circles of the town, with liberal religious tendencies, his influence in the community, both within and without the limits of his parish, was strongly marked. He took an enthusiastic interest in the establishment of an educational system in the town. While not an eloquent preacher in the strict sense of the term, his preaching was sim-

ple, practical and devout, and he possessed the faculty of leading men where he wanted them to follow, and drew around him a body of strong, influential and enterprising citizens. His pastorate was in the line of that historic development which afterward culminated in the Unitarian movement. Beginning in the strict Calvinism of Josiah Cotton, followed by the more advanced John Bass, we find a wider application of these same tendencies in Dr. Hitchcock still emphasized and broadened in the personality of Dr. Edes and later in that of Dr. Hall.

Dr. Hitchcock died Feb. 27, 1803, having served as minister nearly twenty years and rescuing the Society from comparative obscurity, placing it on an enduring foundation. By sagacious management and economy he accumulated a considerable competence, a portion of which he left to the Society. His is one of the figures in Trumbull's great painting in the Capitol at Washington; his portrait hangs also on the walls of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and a marble tablet to his memory adorns the walls of the Church.

Two years elapsed before Rev. Henry Edes, of Boston, was ordained and installed as his successor, July 17, 1805. His sermons were marked by grace and polish of delivery, by inspiring eloquence, and their essence was broad and free, the result of honest opinion and advanced study. He was a graduate of Harvard, class of 1799, and possessed unusual intellectual and social gifts. As he occupied the pulpit during that period of theological controversy and strife in New England known as the Transcendental movement, his was not an enviable position. He took a decided stand from the first with the liberal party, under the leadership of Channing, and the Society overwhelmingly supported his advocacy of that phase of the struggle, in his outspoken expression of his views and sentiments.

Dr. Edes' ministry terminated June, 1832.

Less than six months later there was installed as pastor of this Church one who impressed his personality on this Society and on the life of the community as no other minister had previously done.

Dr. Edward Brooks Hall, then a young clergyman, came here from Northampton, Mass., where he had labored after

his graduation from Harvard in the class of 1820. He was installed as pastor on the fourteenth of November, 1832, and continued as the spiritual leader of more than a generation of worshippers. His attachment to this Church was deep and sincere. His whole life was bound up in it with a self-sacrificing devotion. By his strong, reliant, aggressive personality, his eloquence, energy and persistent championship of every cause that appeared to him right, whether it was freedom, peace, temperance or the abolition of slavery, he became perhaps the leading minister of the city and has so impressed his name on the Church that the two will remain indissolubly connected for decades to come. Every charity of the city became an object of care to him, and many of them he organized.

In March, 1866, after a pastorate of over thirty-three years, his frail body succumbed to the strain that had been put upon it and he was laid in the "Pastor's Rest," the burial ground of the Society, one of the most charming spots in Swan Point, after a noteworthy funeral in which nearly the whole city reverently joined,—members of every denomination gathering around his bier.

A man like Dr. Hall needs no material monument. The various charities of the city, its hospitals, asylums, and his influence among the worshippers in the pews to-day, testify to the influence of the man and his enduring fame, far more than imposing bronze or the finest marble.

Of the remaining ministers of the Society I will not speak, for they are all living, except that consecrated man, that man with a giant's frame and a nature as sweet and tender as that of a child, Rev. Carlton A. Staples, with whose personality and activities while in this city many of you are familiar.

#### LIST OF MINISTERS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

JOSIAH COTTON.....	1728—1747
JOHN BASS.....	1752—1758
DAVID S. ROWLAND.....	1762—1774
JOHN LOTHROP.....	1775—1776
ENOS HITCHCOCK.....	1783—1803
HENRY EDES.....	1805—1832

EDWARD BROOKS HALL.....	1832—1866
ARTHUR MAY KNAPP.....	1868—1871
CARLTON A. STAPLES.....	1872—1881
THOMAS R. SLICER.....	1881—1890
AUGUSTUS M. LORD.....	1890—

The first creed or covenant of the Church, adopted at its organization, was distinctly and unmistakably Calvinistic. It recognized the doctrine of the Trinity, of original sin, of imputed righteousness, and by inference and in general terms, at least, if not in direct statement of fact, the eternal punishment of the wicked.

This was more dogmatic and conservative in belief than those adopted by a majority of the Congregational churches of the neighboring colonies. As an actual historical fact, two of the New England Congregational churches of the present day, Plymouth and Salem, still retain their original covenant, in use since the third decade of the seventeenth century, but they joined the Unitarian communion, the phraseology and breadth of their old statement of faith not conflicting with their changed religious belief.

The first creed was retained only about thirty years, until 1761, when the Church was without even a settled minister, Rev. Mr. Bass having resigned in 1758. Another covenant was then adopted, leaving out the strong Calvinistic features of the previous one, making it a simple covenant of Christian purpose and consecration, professing simply to believe in the Christian religion as contained in the Scriptures and promising to give themselves up to Jehovah their only portion and happiness, to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Mediator and Head, and to the Holy Ghost as Sanctifier, Guide and Comforter.

This was in use until, in 1821, under the pastorate of Dr. Edes, when another was substituted. It is as follows:







INTERIOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1906

COVENANT  
OF THE  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

ADOPTED OCTOBER 27, 1821.

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"We whose names are undersigned do humbly and solemnly devote ourselves to the service of God in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

"We profess our firm belief in the sacred Scriptures, as containing the revealed will of God, and engage to take them for our sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

"We do covenant and engage, to and with each other, that in consequence to our relation to the visible kingdom of the Redeemer, signified by our baptism, we will walk together as a Christian Society in the faith and order of the gospel, agreeably to the laudable practice of the Congregational Churches in New England. And we do farther engage that we will endeavor ourselves, and, so far as in our power, will strive to induce all under our care to live in all good conscience towards God and man; professing ourselves to be in charity with those of every communion who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

"To the faithful performance of these engagements, we depend not on our own unaided strength, but on the assistance of the divine spirit which is promised to all those who sincerely ask it.

"We rely for the pardon of our sins, and our future and final salvation, on the mercy of God, as declared to us by Jesus Christ. And we beseech our Heavenly Father to strengthen us and to enable us to keep this our covenant inviolate; and, at last, to unite us to the General Assembly and Church of the first born which are written in Heaven and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirit of just men made perfect."

This was recognized as the official statement of the religious belief of the Society until March 30, 1882, when, under the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Slicer, the following Covenant was adopted:

COVENANT  
OF THE  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

ADOPTED MARCH 30, 1882.

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"In the love of the truth, and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we join for the worship of God and the service of man."

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In our Sunday School there is in use a statement of belief similar in purport, which is also used by several churches of our faith throughout the country as their official covenant. It is as follows:

"THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD,  
THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN,  
THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS,  
SALVATION BY CHARACTER,  
THE PROGRESS OF MANKIND ONWARD  
AND UPWARD FOREVER."

It is an interesting fact that in the early years of its history this Church was popularly known as the Presbyterian Church—Dr. Hall alludes to the fact in his History of the Society—and some of the early records of the Church were written under that title.



During its long and eventful history the Society has occupied but three houses of worship, and of those, two were on the same site. As will be recalled, the Society in 1723 erected its first Meeting House on the "Old Town House Lot," so styled, the site of the present Superior Court House. After using this building for over seventy years the property was sold to the town in 1793, and the Society immediately erected its second church edifice (through the efforts of the Benevolent Congregational Society) on the same site as the present edifice. It was dedicated Aug. 16, 1795, and used until destroyed by fire on the morning of June 14, 1814. The Society immediately secured the services of a local architect and contractor, John H. Greene, from whose design the present beautiful edifice was erected. Built in the Renaissance style similar to many of the old English churches, it still remains one of the chief architectural ornaments of the city, reflecting the refined taste and professional skill of its designer.

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I have dwelt at considerable length upon those who have occupied this pulpit; of equal importance, from many points of view, are the occupants of the pews, who have supported the minister in his various policies, and sympathized and encouraged him in his efforts to uphold the belief which we profess. From the earliest time this Church has been the recognized religious home of many of the representative citizens of this vicinity. On the interior wall of the Church, on either side of the main entrance, are two plats of the Church with the names of the pew holders—one containing the names of the families of the parish at the present time, the other those of the year 1815, and it is remarkable and at the same time significant that there are so many families represented in both lists.

Col. Daniel Abbott and Dr. Jabez Bowen were among the first members, as were later, Samuel Nightingale, Dep. Governors Darius Sessions and Jabez Bowen. At a still later period on the Church records appear the names of Grindall Rawson, John Reynolds, Joseph Manning, Dr. James Green and Deacon Edward Taylor, who, uniting with the Church at

eleven years of age, before the pastorate of Mr. Rowland, remained an active member until his death under Dr. Hall. During this period John Howland also became interested in the Society, remaining a member for over eighty years, during forty of which he acted as Deacon. A generation later the names of the Burrills appear; also the Lymans, Maurans, Bowens, Sullivan Dorr, Tristram Burgess, Richardson, Nightingale, Samuel W. Bridgham, Hamlin, Crapo, Draper, Whittaker, Jenckes, Bullock, Larcher, Dexter, Earle, Sheldon, Henry, Wheaton, Brown, Tillinghast, and others, names identified with the culture and refinement of the city and as well with its business, professional and political life. Under Dr. Edes and Dr. Hall we notice the names of Anthony, George William Curtis, Burnside, Weeden, the Lippitts, Doyle, and many others. The present congregation fully sustains the traditions and character of the laity of the past.

In about a year a marble memorial tablet will be placed on the interior wall of the Church to commemorate the men who went out from this Society and Sunday School to the War of the Rebellion.

The list, as complete as possible at the present time, is as follows:

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DURING THE WAR OF THE REBELLION, 1861-1865.

Lieut. James H. Armington	Lieut. Frederick S. Brown
Frederic J. Armington	John H. Cady
Gen. Richard Arnold	Sgt. Nathaniel B. Chace
*Corp. Daniel Lyman Arnold	Maj. George W. Cushing
Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside	Geo. W. Cushing, Jr.
*Col. Nathaniel W. Brown	Maj. Harry C. Cushing
Sgt. Edward W. Brown	Samuel T. Cushing
Gen. Joseph P. Balch	Maj. J. J. Comstock
Col. James T. P. Bucklin	Samuel C. Davenport
Lieut. Com. John R. Bartlett, Jr.	*Sgt. Benjamin H. Draper
Lieut. Henry A. Bartlett	Cornelius Draper
Capt. Walter C. Bartlett	Capt. Arthur F. Dexter
Bvt. Col. Martin Page Buffum	Samuel S. Davis
Sgt. Daniel Bush	William L. Dunbar

\* Killed in battle or died from wounds contracted in the service.

*Capt. James Henry Earl	Lieut. Henry Pearce
Maj. W. H. Harrison French	William B. Pearce
*Lieut. George W. Field	Lieut. Col. Joseph S. Pitman
*Corp. Samuel Foster	Lieut. Leonard B. Pratt
Lieut. Charles T. Green	Dexter D. Pearce
Capt. Thomas Green	Christopher Rhodes
Albert N. Green	Adj't. James L. Richardson
*Adj't. George Foster Hodges	Oscar Richardson
*Capt. Wm. Townsend Hodges	Josiah W. Richardson
Chaplain Edward H. Hall	Charles H. Richardson
*Lieut. Wm. Ware Hall	William A. Richardson
Capt. Wm. E. Hamlin	Lieut. Frank A. Rhodes
Pardon S. Jastram	Col. George E. Randolph
William D. Jones	John Randolph
*Lieut. Benj. E. Kelly	Ensign Peyton H. Randolph
Sgt. John B. Kelly	Lieut. R. Kidder Randolph
Lieut. Sylvester R. Knight	Gen. Lewis Richmond
Col. Edwin Metcalf	Gen. James Shaw, Jr.
Maj. George Metcalf	Maj. Richard G. Shaw
Capt. Joel Metcalf	*Capt. John P. Shaw
Gen. Joseph H. Metcalf	* Walter M. Sheldon
*Lieut. Frederick Metcalf	*Capt. Charles Tillinghast
Henry H. Metcalf	* Henry Lyman Tillinghast
James P. Metcalf	Lieut. Nicholas Underwood
Lewis H. Metcalf	Gen. Frank Wheaton
Lieut. Charles Felix Mason	Surgn. Francis L. Wheaton
Adj't. Charles H. Merriman	Lieut. William L. Wheaton
Carlo Mauran	Capt. William B. Weeden
Frank Molton	Lieut. Richard Waterman
Capt. Charles D. Owen	Midshipman Rufus Waterman

Thus, in brief outline, I have indicated the salient features of the progress of this Society, which by its ministry, its membership and activities is so interwoven with the life, growth and progress of the city as to be an integral part of it.

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\* Killed in battle or died from wounds contracted in the service.

REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON TRUST FUNDS  
TO THE  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY,  
AT ITS  
ANNUAL MEETING HELD OCTOBER 1, 1907.

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In accordance with the By-Laws your Committee desires to submit the following Report:

As the details of the income and disbursement of the various funds for the past year will be embodied in the Report of the Treasurer submitted this day, your Committee desires to lay before you the origin, history and development of the various Trust Funds under its supervision.

The different Trust Funds owned by the First Congregational Society in the order of priority are:

Name of Fund.	Date of origin.
Hitchcock Fund .....	1803
Dorrance Fund .....	1813
Throop and Society Fund.....	1815-1817
Cemetery Fund .....	1853
Reynolds Fund .....	1874
Julia Bullock Fund.....	1894
Caroline Richmond Fund.....	1905
Mary G. Henderson Fund.....	1906

## HITCHCOCK FUND.

The oldest Fund held by the Society is the Hitchcock Fund bequeathed to it by the Rev. Dr. Enos Hitchcock, a former Minister of the Society.

Enos Hitchcock was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1744. Choosing the ministry as his profession he entered Harvard University, graduating in 1767, and soon after became associate pastor over the Society in Beverly, Massachusetts. During the War of Independence he joined the Continental Army as Chaplain, and, by his dignity, his patriotic appeals to the troops, and by his wise counsel and advice he soon became intimate with and a trusted adviser of Washington.

At the close of the War he amicably severed his connection with the Society at Beverly—which had never released him—and on October 3, 1783, was installed as pastor of the Benevolent Congregational Church in Providence, continuing in that position for nineteen years. In 1785 he was elected a Fellow of Brown University, and three years later, in 1788, the same University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

During his pastorate here he not only became one of the leading preachers of the town, but took an active interest in all matters relating to civic betterment, especially the establishment and advancement of education. A marble tablet to his memory has been placed on the east wall of the interior of this Church, and his portrait also adorns the walls of the Rhode Island Historical Society's Cabinet.

He died February 27, 1803, and from his will, recorded March 7, 1803—a copy of which in full, together with that of his adopted daughter, Martha H. Jordan, can be found in a volume entitled "Hitchcock Fund," in the possession of this Society—I quote the sections applicable to the purpose of this Report:

*"Imprimis.* Impressed with the importance of preserving Religious Institutions and the necessity of establishing Funds for the support of Religious Worship I give to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence Five Shares in the Providence Bank estimated at Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars the dividend



interest or income only arising therefrom to be applied solely to the support of a learned and pious Minister of the Congregational order. But if there shall be any alienation or appropriation of said property by said Society, contrary to the true intent and design above expressed, it shall be in the power of any of my Lawful Heirs to sue for and recover said Property and upon receipt thereof the same shall be divided amongst my Brothers and Sisters or their Heirs in proportion to the Legacies hereafter given them in this Will.

*"Item.* I give to Martha H. Jordan my adopted daughter one Share in the Providence Bank, in Trust for the purpose of her receiving the dividend or Interest that may be payable thereon and paying the same to my faithful Black man Caesar whom I purchased from Slavery at eleven years old and caused to be manumitted and to whom I give the dividends or Interest payable as aforesaid towards his support, during his life. Also I give to the said Caesar a Suit of mourning such as he shall choose.\*

*"Item.* All the rest of my Estate not herein otherwise disposed of I give to the said Martha H. Jordan but it is my desire that as she will receive by this bequest divers Insurance Company and Bank Shares that she should receive only the Dividends which may be payable thereon from time to time and that she should make suitable provision in case of her decease without issue that one moiety of all the said Shares which she shall receive as aforesaid shall be vested in the Benevolent Congregational Society and be added to the Five Bank Shares herein before given to said Society be applied to the same purpose and held on the same Condition as the said Shares."

And the said Martha H. Jordan carried out the intentions of her benefactor, for from her Will, dated May 6, 1803, and recorded May 23, 1803, I quote:

*"Imprimis.* Whereas the Reverend Enos Hitchcock Doctor of Divinity by his last Will and Testament gave me a part of his Estate consisting of Bank and Insurance Company Shares, and in the same Will expressed his desire, that I would make suitable provision for the disposal thereof after my decease, as mentioned in said Will. Now in-compliance with his Request I do give and bequeath all the Shares in the Providence Bank (except one share given me as Trustee for Caesar a black man named in said Will) all the Shares in the Exchange Bank, and in the Washington Insurance Company, which were given me by the said Enos in his

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\* The remains of the above mentioned Caesar are interred in the Society's burial lot at Swan Point Cemetery.

Will aforesaid in manner following—that is to say—One moiety thereof to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence to be added to the five Bank Shares given to the said Society by the said Enos in his Will aforesaid, and to be applied to the same purpose and held on the same Condition as the said Shares, and subject to the like forfeiture upon the alienation or appropriation thereof contrary to the true intent of said Enos as expressed in his said Will.

*Item.* The share in the Providence Bank given me as Trustee of said Caesar, I give to the said Benevolent Congregational Society upon the following conditions, that is to say, that during the life of said Caesar, the said Society shall pay him the Dividend or Interest that may be payable thereon towards his support and at his decease that they pay to the said Caleb Hitchcock David Hitchcock Enos Cutler and the Widow and Children and Grandchildren of said Moses Hitchcock the one half of the value of said Share or of the proceeds thereof in case the same shall be vested in any other kind of property, to be divided amongst them, in the same proportion as the other Shares before mentioned are ordered to be divided, to whom I give the moiety of the value of said Share the Share itself not being capable of division—And I do order the said Share to be held by said Society after the decease of said Caesar, for the same purpose, and subject to the like forfeiture with the Five Shares given the said Society by the said Enos in his Will aforesaid.”

As will be observed by the above, the Benevolent Congregational Society came into possession of the following property as the result of these bequests:

Sept. 27, 1803 Five Shares in Providence Bank given by Rev. Enos Hitchcock, D. D.

June 6, 1804 Five Shares in Providence Bank given by Martha H. Jordan in compliance with the request of the said Enos Hitchcock.

June 6, 1804 One Share in Providence Bank given by Martha H. Jordan in trust for support of Caesar.

June 6, 1804 Four Shares in Exchange Bank given by Martha H. Jordan.

June 6, 1804 Fifteen Shares in Washington Insurance Company given by Martha H. Jordan.

On June 6, 1804, the Society purchased two shares of the stock of the Providence Bank from the executors of the Es-

tate of Martha H. Jordan which were combined with the other eleven shares of the Fund and have so remained up to the present time.

As a result of the fires at Chicago, October, 1871, and at Boston in November, 1872, the par value of the stock of the Providence Washington Insurance Company was reduced to \$5 (five dollars) a share. By the consolidation of the Providence Washington Insurance Company and the Newport Fire and Marine Insurance Company in 1875, the fifteen (15) shares were reduced to one and a half shares—par value fifty dollars. November 13, 1875, one-half share was purchased by the Treasurer of this Society under advice of the Committee on Trust Funds who were instructed to consider the advisability of purchasing the half share at a meeting of the Society held November 2, 1875. On November 9, 1905, the four shares of National Exchange Bank stock were sold and the proceeds were invested in a Certificate of Deposit in the same Institution. So that the securities comprising this Fund consist at the present time of:

13 Shares Providence National Bank.

Certificate of Deposit in National Exchange Bank.

2 Shares Providence Washington Insurance Co.

I would state in parenthesis that in one item of his will Dr. Hitchcock left sixty volumes from his library to the "Proprietors of the Library in the Parish of Brookfield," upon condition that they apply to the Legislature of the State of Massachusetts for an act of incorporation, and in another he left one hundred dollars to the above Library upon condition that its Proprietors raise a like sum by subscription or otherwise, for the purchase of new books for said Library.

The above facts, coupled with that in relation to that of his black servant, together with other known facts concerning him, must convince us that in Enos Hitchcock this Society had an unusually able and fearless Minister, a man of commanding personality and strong individuality, with a breadth and clearness of view far in advance of that of his own generation, and by character and attainments fully equal to the best traditions of this Pulpit.



In this connection I would state that on January 13, 1777, Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, a brother of Dr. Enos Hitchcock, commanding a brigade under Washington in the Continental Army, died in Morristown, New Jersey, from exposure due to the severe hardships encountered by the army in that terrible winter's campaign.

From the "Life and Recollections of John Howland," by Edwin M. Stone, page 78, I quote :

"About the third day after our arrival at Morristown Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, who commanded the five regiments composing our brigade, died from the exposure and sufferings he had experienced in this dreadful campaign. He was a very accomplished gentleman and a fine officer. Few of the generals exceeded or equalled him in talents. He was educated at Yale. Some hours before his death, when unable to hold a pen he requested an officer and the physician to write as his will that he gave one half of his property to his only brother and the other half to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence. This they wrote and signed in his presence and it was confirmed by the Court of Probate."

The will above referred to was proved in the Court of Probate March 19, 1777, and can be found in Book of Wills 6, page 174. It is as follows :

"I give one half of my estate to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence—the remainder to be equally divided among my brethren.

Morristown Jany 10, 1777."

Witness Samuel Armstrong.

William Holliday

Benjamin Boss.

"N. B. The Interlineation was before the evidences signed—By Colo. Daniel Hitchcock. Desire I wrote the above & he then appeared to Me to be in Perfect State of Mind.

ELISHA STORY."

Annexed to the will is an affidavit signed and sworn to by the above witnesses before Will Livingstone, Governor of the State of New Jersey, to the effect that "said Daniel Hitchcock Declared in their Presence and Hearing that through excessive Pain and Weakness he was unable to sign the Said instrument

and that to the best of their judgment the Said Daniel Hitchcock was of a Sound mind & in his perfect senses at the Time of the aforesaid Publication."

An inventory of the Estate filed by the Executor appointed by the Court places the total value of his property of all kinds at £644-12-4½ or about \$3,136.29 at the current rate of sterling exchange. So that if the full amount of the value of his Estate as inventoried was realized the Benevolent Congregational Society came into possession of about fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) as its share of the bequest.

It is not improbable that the funds with which the Society purchased two shares of bank stock from the Estate of Martha H. Jordan came from the above source. As the early records of the Society have been lost, it is utterly impossible to verify the assertion, but as the shares were merged into the Hitchcock Fund, it would have been very appropriate, and lends additional strength to the argument.

Be the claim substantiated or not, the fact remains undisputed that Colonel Daniel Hitchcock was a benefactor of the Benevolent Congregational Society, and as such his name should be associated with those whose personality is bound up with the history and growth of this Society.

#### DORRANCE FUND.

John Dorrance, a prominent citizen of the Town of Providence and to whom this Society is indebted for the above bequest, was born in Scituate, R. I., in 1747. He entered Rhode Island College (now Brown University), graduating in 1774. He afterwards practiced law and became one of the leading attorneys of the State. In 1794 he was elected Justice of the Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions, retaining that position by repeated re-elections until 1801.

He was very active in the political life of the community, representing this town frequently in the General Assembly, and was a candidate for Congress, although defeated. In the very

heated, and, at times, acrimonious political discussions of that period, his was always a prominent figure.

His estate, on which his "Mansion House"—as he styles it in his will—was situated, was the estate now numbered 73 Westminster Street, occupied on the ground floor by the Westminster Bank. The present Dorrance Street was also named after him.

He died June 29, 1813, and from the codicil of his will, recorded July 5, 1813, in Book II, Page 328, I quote:

"Fifthly— Taking into consideration the importance of Supporting the Public Worship of Almighty GOD to whom I feel indebted for every blessing which I have enjoyed through life and to whom I look for happiness in the life to come, and further taking into consideration the attachment which I have ever had and still have to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence, I do hereby give and bequeath to said Society and their Successors forever the Sum of One thousand Dollars to be paid to them in one year after the decease of my beloved Wife out of the other fourth part of said residue of my estate and hereby make this legacy to Said Society chargeable on the same fourth part of the Said residue of my estate; the same Thousand Dollars to be vested in such funds or stocks that it may become a part of the permanent funds of said Society, the income interest or profite arising therefrom only to be made use of and that to be applied solely to the Support of a learned and pious Minister of the Gospel of the Congregational Order: But if there shall be any alienation or appropriation of said Thousand Dollars or any part thereof or of the use, income or interest arising therefrom by said Society contrary to my true intent and meaning as above expressed it shall be in the power of any one or more of my heirs at law to sue for and recover the above legacy from said Society for the use and benefit of all my heirs at law among whom the same shall be divided in equal portions."

The fund is at present invested (as it has been invested since 1838) in 20 Shares Mechanics National Bank Stock.

#### THROOP AND SOCIETY FUND.

Another leading personage prominent in the early history of the Town of Providence whom we, as a Society, should hold in grateful remembrance, is Dr. Amos Throop. He was born

in Woodstock, Conn., in 1735, but his father dying the same year he was left as an infant without kin or resources.

Dr. Jabez Bowen, the then leading physician of Providence, residing on the street that now bears his name, and, in fact, named after him, being an old friend and distant connection of the family, befriended the unfortunate child. He took him into his own family, educated him and taught him all he could of his own profession.

The young man read all the medical works available at that time, visited with the Doctor on his professional calls, and so equipped himself that at the death of Dr. Bowen in 1770, he succeeded to his practice. Like nearly all physicians of that day he was the proprietor of an apothecary shop, which was situated on the easterly side of North Main Street near Cheap-side (now the west side of the lower portion of North Main Street).

Of very affable disposition, generous, hospitable and public spirited, he was a prominent figure in the social, business, political and religious life of the town. He was elected to the General Assembly but declined a renomination. When the National Exchange Bank was organized in 1801, he became its first President, holding that position continuously until his death in 1814. He was one of the original incorporators of the Benevolent Congregational Society, but withdrew after a few years and attended King's Church, now Saint John's Protestant Episcopal Church on North Main Street, where he became active and prominent.

He was organizer and first President of the Rhode Island Medical Society, and in the "Transactions of the Rhode Island Medical Society," volume 4, page 135, can be found a lengthy sketch of his life, together with his likeness. An oil painting of him also hangs on the walls of the Rhode Island Historical Society's Cabinet.

He died April 14, 1814, having given previously a bond payable six months after the decease of himself and wife to the Benevolent Congregational Society for \$1,000, the proceeds of which were applied, as is inferred from the Treasurer's account, to the purchase of 59 shares of the original stock of the

old Union Bank, the Benevolent Congregational Society being an original subscriber to that amount at the time of its organization and afterwards increasing its holdings to 70 shares.

Other sums received from a balance on hand after the erection of the new Meeting House seem to have been added to the above fund, as appears by the report of the Committee dated February 13, 1817. The addition of the funds of the Society to that of the Throop Fund undoubtedly originated the compound title of the Fund as it now appears in the reports of the Treasurer and of this Committee.

The old record book of the Society in which was probably recorded the intended disposition of those sums of money has been for many years lost, but the late Charles H. Sheldon, for many years Treasurer of this Society, has left a memorandum to the effect that from careful inquiry of the older members of the Society, a like disposition as to that of the Hitchcock Fund should be made of the income of this fund, and it has been for many years applied to that purpose.

The Union Bank having gone into liquidation, the proceeds were invested in the Stock of the National Exchange Bank, and so held until sold by vote of the Society November 9, 1905, when it was invested in the following securities and is now so held.

The invested securities of the Fund are as follows:

Six bonds of Connecticut R. R. & Lighting Company.

One bond of N. Y. Central & Hudson River R. R. Co.

#### CEMETERY FUND.

On April 27, 1849, as per a deed on file, the Benevolent Congregational Society purchased from the Swan Point Cemetery Corporation, a plot of ground "in the easterly part of said cemetery, consisting of about (5) five acres," for \$7,505.20, its payment being made by a note. The Benevolent Congregational Society having gone out of existence the above plot was transferred on the books of the Cemetery Corporation December 28, 1868, to the First Congregational Society by authority of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, the



latter Society having been duly incorporated by act of the Legislature.

At a meeting of the Benevolent Congregational Society held Tuesday evening, February 8, 1853, it was voted:

"Any sums that may be hereafter received from the sale of lots shall be faithfully appropriated by the Society as a permanent Cemetery Fund to be vested in productive stocks and said stock shall be designated on the books of the Treasurer as the Cemetery Fund and the Principal of said Fund shall forever hereafter be kept entire and inviolate for the purpose aforesaid but all dividends and income accruing thereon shall forever hereafter be applied to the preservation and ornamenting of said cemetery by this Society through the Committee on the Cemetery and Cemetery Fund acting under the Society's advice and direction, from time to time, and to no other object or purpose whatever"

As at first invested the fund included:

20 shares Liberty Bank Stock.  
6 shares National Eagle Bank.

The Liberty Bank having gone into liquidation the amount received in dividends was invested in stock of the National Exchange Bank, which was sold November 9, 1905, and reinvested in bonds of Oregon Short Line R. R. Company.

The first investment also included the above mentioned Stock of the National Eagle Bank, which after liquidation netted a dividend on October 11, 1901, of \$42.40 a share, and a final dividend, January 31, 1902, of \$8.00 a share.

The Fund at the present time consists of:

80 shares Blackstone Canal National Bank Stock.  
10 shares Providence Gas Company.  
5 Bonds Oregon Short Line R. R. Co.

#### REYNOLDS FUND.

But little is known of Captain John Reynolds, the founder of the fund which bears his name, beyond the fact that he was a retired master mariner and a constant attendant of this Church. He resided for over thirty years in the residence

numbered 31 Benevolent Street, where he died quite suddenly December 18, 1859, at the advanced age of 87 years.

By his will, found in Book 18, page 501, he bequeathed to this Society upon the death of his wife, Lydia J. Reynolds, his Mansion House and lot, where he resided, for the benefit of the poor of the parish. It is designated as Lot 390 on Assessors Plat 12, situated on the south side of Benevolent Street, 157 feet east of Brown Street.

Annexed is the paragraph of his will referred to:

"Eighth:—At the decease of my said wife I give and devise to the First Benevolent Congregational Church and Society and their successors and assigns in this City in fee simple forever my Mansion House and Lot on which it stands together with my garden Lot adjoining where I now live on Benevolent Street in this City with all the privileges and appurtenances thereof, for the special benefit and behoof of the Poor of said Church and Society hoping that said bequest will be so managed as to afford the greatest possible relief to those for whom it is intended. And I hereby order my Executors or their successors on the happening of the contingency upon which this desire depends, to transfer and set over to said Church and Society as aforesaid my Mansion House and estates on Benevolent Street and to give good titles for the same."

In another item of his will he bequeathed several parcels of personal property to the Town Council of his native town of Exeter, Rhode Island, it being his desire that the Town purchase and equip a farm suitable for the support of the poor and indigent of the town.

Lydia J. Reynolds, his widow, died September 19, 1874, at the above mentioned residence, and the estate came into possession of this Society by deed from the executors October 22d of the same year.

At the annual meeting of the First Congregational Society held October 6, 1874, a motion was passed, "that the Committee on Trust Funds examine into the matter of the Reynolds Estate and report what was best to do with the same." After examining the estate this Committee requested that a special meeting of the Society be called and notice was given from the pulpit that said meeting would be held in the Chapel on November 9, 1874, at 7½ o'clock P. M.

The Committee then reported that after careful examination of the estate and obtaining estimates of repairs on the same, that it was not advisable to repair it but recommended selling it at auction and reinvesting the proceeds.

Whereupon the following votes were passed:

"Resolved: That the Committee on Trust Funds are hereby authorized and directed to sell at public auction the estate on Benevolent Street in the City of Providence devised to the First Congregational Society by the last will of the late Captain John Reynolds.

"Resolved: That the Treasurer of this Society is hereby directed to execute, seal, acknowledge and deliver to the purchaser at such auction, such deed of said Estate as shall be approved by said Committee on Trust Funds.

"Resolved: That said Committee are hereby directed, in case it becomes necessary, to apply to the Supreme Court for authority to sell such Estate and reinvest the proceeds upon the same trusts as are in said will contained.

"Resolved: That said Committee are hereby directed to invest the proceeds of such sale in a note or notes secured by mortgage or in Bonds of the State of Rhode Island or the City of Providence or in some National Bank Stocks and that said investment be known as the 'Reynolds Fund.'"

The Committee then requested Mr. Francis J. Sheldon, Auctioneer, to advertise said estate to be sold at auction on Monday, November 16, 1874, at 12 o'clock. It was sold at that time to Mrs. Charlotte R. Goddard for five thousand six hundred and fifty dollars. The deed was made by the Treasurer, but it being Trust property her attorney was not satisfied with the title until permission was obtained from the Supreme Court to sell said estate. That was obtained on the 7th of December, 1874, and the deed passed and money paid over. The Supreme Court authorized the Society to invest in Bonds of the Providence and Springfield Railroad Company, guaranteed by the City of Providence, or deposit with the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company.

The Society then purchased five (5) one thousand dollar bonds of the Providence and Springfield Railroad Company, thus guaranteed by the City of Providence, which, with pre-



miums paid, cost \$5,079.58. The balance—\$570.42—was deposited with the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company, Participation Account.

The bonds of the Providence and Springfield Railroad Company having become due and paid, the Committee on Trust Funds on October 1, 1892, bought fifty shares (50) National Exchange Bank Stock at \$100 a share, costing \$5,000, and in order to comply with the decree of the Court to legalize the Fund, deposited the remainder—\$79.58—in the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company.

By reference to the Decree of the Supreme Court, October Term, 1874, authorizing the First Congregational Society to sell the property above mentioned and invest the proceeds thereof in certain securities, the Committee found that they could not legally hold National Bank Stock without applying to the Supreme Court to modify such decree, and consequently the bank stock was sold and the amount deposited in the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Company, Participation Account.

#### JULIA BULLOCK FUND.

This fund was the amount included in a bequest made by the late Julia Bullock, who in section four of her will, recorded June 19, 1894, bequeathed to this Society the sum of five thousand dollars in trust. The will in full is recorded in Book No. 5, page 370, at City Hall.

Miss Bullock is well remembered by the older members of this Society as a lifelong member of the Church. She was very active in both Church and Sunday School, taking a great interest in all the various activities of the Society, and dispensing a lavish though unostentatious charity in various channels.

Born in Providence, November 10, 1814, the child of Richmond and Rhoda (Peckham) Bullock, she was connected with two prominent local families and in later years occupied the residence situated on the northeast corner of Brown and Benevolent Streets, where she died May 22, 1894.

*Extracts from the Will of Miss Julia Bullock.*

"Sec. Third. I give devise and bequeath all my rights powers and privileges in and to the free bed which I established at the Rhode Island Hospital entitled the Mrs. Rhoda Bullock free bed unto the First Congregational Society in said City of Providence its successors and assigns forever.

"Sec. Fourth. I give devise and bequeath to the said First Congregational Society in said Providence my pew in its Church to be and remain unto it, its successors and assigns forever. I also give devise and bequeath to the aforesaid First Congregational Society its successors, and successors in said Trust, and their respective heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, Five thousand dollars in Trust for the following purposes.

"To invest the same, as soon as may wisely be done in such bank or other stocks, railroad, state or municipal or other bonds, notes secured by mortgage, or other forms of personal estate, as the said Trustee of said fund may deem prudent, having regard rather to security of investment rather than amount of income, and after the payments of all taxes, if any such there be; and other burdens imposed thereon by law or rendered necessary for its benefit, and all and every expense necessary for the management and preservation of said trust estate, to apply the income thereof from time to time in its discretion and in such sums as it may deem best to the use and benefit of such deserving poor as it desires to assist giving preference to such as belong to or usually worship with the said Society.

"And I direct that the said Society or other Trustee or Trustees for the time being in charge of the aforesaid trust estate may at any time during the continuance of said trust whenever they may deem it advantageous to the said trust estate or any part thereof sell the same or any portion thereof at public or private sale and the proceeds of such sale or sales reinvest in the various securities and kinds of estate above enumerated for the purposes of said trust, and make sign seal execute acknowledge and deliver all such deeds, transfers and other instruments, which in their judgment are necessary or expedient properly to discharge the powers authorities discretions and duties of the aforesaid trust containing such agreements, powers, powers of sale, covenants and other provisions as they may deem appropriate, proper and necessary to that end."

The fund consists of

20 shares Providence & Worcester R. R. Company's Stock.

## CAROLINE RICHMOND FUND.

On November 8, 1905, Miss Caroline Richmond, a lifelong resident of this city, daughter of the late George M. and Anna (Eddy) Richmond, died at Fountain, Colorado, and was buried from her late residence, 65 College Street. She was very much interested in the phase of religious belief which this Society represents as the following extracts from her will, found in Book of Wills 91, page 14, proved December 12, 1905, will testify:

"Eighth:—I give to the First Congregational (Unitarian) Society Four Thousand (\$4000) dollars; to the Women's Alliance of the same Two thousand (\$2000) dollars; to the Westminster and Woodbury Memorial Church Three thousand (\$3000) dollars. I bequeath to the American Unitarian Association, a corporation having its headquarters at 25 Beacon Street in the City of Boston, the sum of eighteen thousand (\$18000) dollars."

The full amount bequeathed as above was duly received from her Executors and is now invested as follows:

National Exchange Bank, Certificate of Deposit.

## MARY G. HENDERSON FUND.

Mary G. Henderson, widow of the late William H. Henderson, was the daughter of Michael and Hannah Freeborn, of Newport, at which place she also was born. She died in Providence, July 16, 1906, at 150 Clifford Street, where she and her late husband had resided for forty-two years. In her will, proved August 14, 1906, and found in Book 94, page 66, she remembered this Society by the following bequest:

"Thirteenth, I give and bequeath to the First Congregational (Unitarian) Society of Providence, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars."

On October 11, 1906, the Treasurer received from her executor the above amount, and it is now on deposit in the National Exchange Bank, Certificate of Deposit.

In this connection I will insert extracts from the will of her husband, the late William H. Henderson, a prominent business man of this city and for many years Treasurer of the American Screw Company.

He died February 3, 1897, and in his will proved March 2, 1897, found in Book 40, page 102, are the following provisions:

"Sixth:—To pay the sum of One Thousand Dollars to the First Congregational (Unitarian) Society in said Providence for the uses of said Corporation; but to be held by it in trust and to be kept invested so long as the rules of law will permit, with power to change the investments and reinvestments thereof as aforesaid; and the net income thereof to apply towards the maintenance of the Sunday School of said Society.

"But none of these foregoing legacies payable after the death of my wife (except that to said Mary R. Read, that to the Island Cemetery Company and those out of the fund of Twenty Thousand Dollars set apart for my brother and his wife and my nephew and niece as aforesaid) shall be paid until the expiration of ten years after the death of my said wife, or if I should survive her, ten years after my death, unless the total value of my estate shall, within that time, in the judgment of my said Trustees be sufficient to pay the same and leave the sum of One Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars for the Henderson Home for Aged Men hereinafter provided for."

It was the desire of Mr. Henderson, to which he gave expression in his will, to partially repay what he considered an obligation to the people of Newport, Rhode Island, the birth-place of both his wife and himself, and he therefore so willed that his estate will accumulate by investment and reinvestment until it reaches the amount of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000.00), when his executors will erect and equip at an expense of twenty-five thousand dollars a "Home for Aged Men" in the City of Newport, and with the remainder, one hundred thousand dollars, establish an Endowment Fund the income of which shall be expended in its maintenance and support.\*

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\*The Society has received from the Executors of the Estate of the late William H. Henderson the one thousand dollars mentioned above, the interest of which is to be applied to the uses of the Sunday School.

"In the preparation of this report in addition to our own researches we have drawn largely from an elaborate memorandum left by the late Charles H. Sheldon, who acted as Secretary and Clerk of this Society from August 1, 1859, until October 13, 1868, and who afterwards was Treasurer from October 5, 1869, until his death, February 15, 1902. We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the many courtesies extended by the present Treasurer, Augustus R. Pierce, and also to Clarence S. Bridgham, Librarian of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

"An endowment Fund belonging to any institution, whether educational, charitable or religious, is of inestimable value to such institution in developing the work and purposes which it represents. The combined aggregate amount of the various Trust Funds controlled by this Society forms practically an Endowment Fund for us and is of great assistance in dispensing a wise, discriminating charity and in decreasing the financial burdens of our members, thus enabling them to give wider scope to the various activities that cluster around and necessarily look to the Church for support.

"To those who, during several generations, have been imbued with a deep, strong religious faith, combined with an acknowledgment, sometimes expressed and always implied, of an affectionate attachment to this historic Church, and all that it stands for, have with wise foresight and intelligent generosity given of their substance to perpetuate this work, we as a Society owe a debt of deep appreciation and should strive to keep their names in grateful remembrance."





**A HISTORICAL RETROSPECT**  
**OF THE**  
**First Congregational Society**  
**IN**  
**PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

**By CHARLES M. YOUNG**











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